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Preparatory Committee
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Geneva, 14-15 July 2014
Item 6 of the provisional agenda
Considerations on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction

Outcome of Fourth Session of the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas, 27 to 29 May 2014, Guayaquil, Ecuador

Note by the secretariat*

1. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 67/209 of December 2012, the Assembly, in looking forward to regional platforms scheduled in 2014, stressed the importance of regional coordination in the framework of the preparatory process for the Third World Conference.

2. The Fourth Session of the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas was held from 27 to 29 May 2014 in Guayaquil, Ecuador, producing a meeting statement which read:

"Communiqué of Guayaquil, Ecuador

"IV Session of the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

"Guayaquil, 29 May, 2014

"1. We, participants at the Fourth Session of the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas,[1] meeting in Guayaquil, Ecuador from 27 to 29 May 2014, thank the people and Government of the Republic of Ecuador, particularly the Risk Management Secretariat and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, for the

* This document was submitted late due to the need to include as much information from consultations as possible.

1 Representatives of the region's States and territories, parliamentarians, local and subnational authorities, regional and sub-regional coordination and cooperation agencies, international organizations, international and bilateral financial institutions, civil society organizations and the media.

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hospitality and support provided for the successful carrying out of this Fourth Session of the Regional Platform:

"2. Acknowledge the substantial contributions of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015 to the formulation of strategies and policies for disaster risk management.[2] In order progress towards eradicating poverty, reducing inequality and achieving sustainable and inclusive development, it is necessary to assess progress and challenges in implementing disaster risk management policies at all territorial and sectoral levels and suggest the necessary adjustments of the post-2015 Framework for Action.

"3. Highlight that the economic loss and damage resulting from disasters and their impact on development continue to increase, mainly from disasters associated with the occurrence of low-intensity recurrent hydro-meteorological events. Moreover, this situation tends to be aggravated by disorderly population growth and current patterns of development, in particular accelerated urbanization which, when accompanied by weak structures of governance, leads to higher levels of exposure and a greater level of vulnerability in general of nations and communities.

"4. Emphasize the great opportunity to influence, from the participants' respective realms of action, the negotiations on the definition of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as well as the new strategic agenda arising from the World Humanitarian Summit.

"5. Highlight the leadership of national governments and the significant progress in the transformation of the legal and institutional frameworks and practices, supported by parliamentarians, with the aim of consolidating a shift away from response-oriented approaches towards development-oriented approaches, both at the territorial and sectoral level, for effective risk reduction such as the PCGIR[3] in Central America, the CDM[4] Strategy 2014-2024 in the Caribbean, as well as the definition of risk management as a State policy in countries such as Ecuador; new comprehensive risk management laws such as in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Mexico and Peru; and the many efforts at the local and community level.

"6. Recognize the critical role of local governments in disaster risk reduction and strategic management of sustainable development, as frontline governments.

"7. Acknowledge the contributions of the "Making Cities Resilient: My city is getting ready" Global Campaign and the achievements obtained in local risk management and urban resilience.

"8. Note that 89% of the countries in the Americas are implementing national initiatives on safe hospitals and improving the resilience of new and existing health care services in order to ensure continuity of operations in the event of a disaster.

"9. Affirm that protecting essential services, particularly schools and hospitals, is a social priority, a collective and political responsibility and is crucial for achieving resilient communities.

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2 According to the "Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2013" (UNISDR, GAR 2013), "disaster risk reduction" refers to the goal set for policies to reduce risk while "disaster risk management" refers to the actions for achieving this goal.

3 Central American Policy on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management (PCGIR).

4 Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy CDM 2014-2024.

"10. Reiterate the importance of community participation in disaster risk reduction and civic responsibility, as well as the responsibility of the States and Territories, to take necessary action in this regard in accordance with their respective regulatory framework.

"11. Recognize the work and contributions of community-based civil society organizations and networks in comprehensively building resilient communities, including women's, indigenous and Afro-descendant organizations, as demonstrated through significant participation in the different venues of decision-making at the local, national, regional and global level.

"12. Express our commitment to contribute to the process of review and refinement of the HFA that will result in the post-2015 International Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, recognizing that management capacities and the availability of resources to advance towards the risk reduction goals vary considerably across the Americas. This framework should particular special attention on the unique situation of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in terms of exposure and vulnerability.

"13. Recognize the importance of regional cooperation and integration mechanisms such as CARICOM, SICA, UNASUR, AEC, CELAC and OAS as well as on intergovernmental agreements and Action Plans aimed at strengthening policies adopting strategic risk management agendas.

"14. Support the commitments presented before the Regional Platform by representatives of local governments, as well as the voluntary commitments of civil society organizations, the private sector and children, youth and adolescents.

"15. Recognize the need to improve coordination in international disaster response, including the process established by the international humanitarian assistance mechanism (MIAH), and further strengthen the preparedness, response and recovery capacity at all community, local, national and regional levels.

"16. Value the contributions of the scientific and academic community in generating knowledge and technological development for risk management decision-making.

"*Recommendations for the post-2015 international framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (HFA2)*

"17. Actively work towards achieving coherence among the new Agendas surrounding Development, Risk Management, Climate Change, Humanitarian Action and the Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development. Such coherence is expressed in the definition of common indicators and objectives as well as in the efficient use of resources to promote greater impact within nations and communities.

"18. Periodically review the progress towards comprehensive development, enabling the evaluation of coherence and convergence in the application through, among other things, the development of indicators of resilience and new agreed upon methodologies for monitoring and follow-up, with particular emphasis on the priorities of communities and countries.

"19. Improve disaster risk management governance among the various sectors and levels of government, ensuring the responsible participation of the different actors at the local and national levels through, as relevant, decentralization with allocated budgets, clear subsidiary systems, regulations, policies, legislation and sectorial action plans and accountability mechanisms.

"20. Incorporate a focus on the rights of all social sectors, in particular the rights of women, children, persons with disabilities, the elderly and the young as a crosscutting foundation of sustainable development and the implementation of public policies; guaranteeing their inclusive participation in the mechanisms for protection and equitable access to health services, education, dignified labour and social security. Such a focus must value ancestral knowledge and traditions of indigenous peoples and people of African descent throughout the region to prepare, deal with and overcome disasters.

"21. Promote a cross-cutting focus on gender in the development of local and national public policies on disaster risk reduction guaranteeing that gender considerations are mainstreamed within institutions and recognizing the active participation and leadership of women in strategic risk management.

"22. Place community participation at the center of risk management in order to enhance greater comprehension and understanding of risks, access to information, decision-making, strengthened capacities and organization, the protection of lives, livelihoods and food security.

"23. Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the different actors among the various levels of government and society, respecting autonomy and the established mechanisms surrounding coordination and cooperation.

"24. Explicitly incorporate local governments within the post-2015 Framework for Action (HFA2) as relevant actors within risk management and sustainable development, with specific competencies and mindful of the diversity of situations as per institutions and resources of the local governments throughout the Americas.

"25. Create mechanisms and tools that allow local governments to access various types of resources as well as scientific, technical and financial cooperation in a decentralized way.

"26. Nurture alliances, networks, conglomerations of communities and city alliances as well as the participation of citizens, communities and civil society in order to achieve true good governance surrounding urban risk and resilience and the local, national, regional and international levels.

"27. Promote urban and rural land-use planning as a key element for disaster risk reduction: incorporating a corrective and prospective vision of risk within the planning policies and regulatory frameworks surrounding the mandate and daily responsibilities of all levels of government. It is essential to strengthen methodologies that incorporate such visions within relevant regulatory instruments, planning codes and standards, as well as to achieve greater access and citizen participation and interaction among local authorities and the private sector.

"28. Establish the development and implementation of safe school and hospital policies and programmes as a priority for action at the local, national and regional levels in order to protect and guarantee access to education and health services before, during and after disaster situations, as a contribution towards the achievement of the millennium development goals.

"29. Protect and promote the social, physical and mental wellbeing of people as a fundamental asset of communities and nations in order to achieve the goals of sustainable development and disaster risk management.

"30. Stimulate policies surrounding fiscal vulnerability reduction in order to guarantee sustainability: including new regulations that contemplate reducing the vulnerability of new projects, cost-benefit analysis manuals and mechanisms for disaster risk reduction budget tracking; as well as the development of complementary instruments

for risk transfer and retention. Similarly, motivate coordinated work among those overseeing the planning and implementation of projects.

"31. Highlight that the responsibility of the private sector in building sustainable development should be registered within the mainstreamed efforts of all actors involved in risk management. Aspects such as business continuity and protecting employees from labour risks, while important, should also be integrated within a broader and more strategic vision of risk reduction generated by their activities within their social and territorial surroundings.

"32. Define the roles, responsibilities, resources and inter-institutional coordination for recovery. States are encouraged to develop anticipatory planning processes surrounding recovery, including institutional budgets that ensure the avoidance of reconstructing risk and generating new risks.

"33. Promote the responsible participation of media in awareness-raising processes, education and public information in order to support risk management policies and incentives for resilience.

"34. Integrate knowledge and information for formulating evidence-based risk management policies. To do so, access to interdisciplinary scientific inputs must be ensured for all actors, with consideration given to local identity as well as conditions regarding culture, gender and special needs. The establishing of a scientific academic mechanism is desired, with the support of governments, in order to advise country authorities and strengthening exchange networks.

"35. Design and articulate educational proposals in schools and universities that emphasize civic values and responsibility.

"36. Foster horizontal and triangular cooperation to favour the exchange of good practices and stimulate strengthening local, national and regional capacities that take into consideration trans-boundary elements and shared resources in terms of ecosystems, watershed management, cultural aspects, among others.

"37. Ensure proper disaster preparedness, readiness and response that include improved coordination capacities at all levels, including legal aspects, resource mobilization and management of technological information systems, as well as proper planning of early recovery to ensure the protection of livelihoods and productive assets, including livestock, working animals, implements and seeds.

"38. Promote integration and coherence among the disaster risk reduction agendas of the United Nations System. To this end, we call upon the United Nations to strengthen its Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) in order to fulfil its mandate, including risk modelling, disaster loss databases, review of regional strategies, as well as to lead the review of terminology and support monitoring the implementation of the post-2015 framework."